

Shipping Oranges in Baskets.

If oranges can be sent from California to Eastern markets in baskets, there is no doubt that our growers could use them. Whether it would pay or not is a question, but one that we believe should be investigated. If baskets are desirable, there is time before the next crop is ready for shipment, to make the necessary arrangements for securing a supply.

The California Fruit Grower tells how they are being tried in that state.

The innovation of shipping oranges in baskets has reached Redlands, says the Redlands Review of April 6. The first car to go out this way went off last night from the Golden Orange Association, and Manager C. M. Brown freely says it is an experiment with him, but one that he hopes will prove a great success. The baskets are large, cheap things, with a cover that is held on by wires slipped over a projecting cleat. The baskets hold considerably less than a box, and the fruit is not wrapped in paper, but is merely rolled hastily into the basket and the cover placed on. Then the baskets are packed in a car, with boards between the rows and separating them also on the sides, as well as above and below. It is the work of but a moment to fill a basket, probably the time occupied being not more than one-tenth as much as in packing a box in the usual manner.

The fruit to be sent is of the extra choice variety, and it was decided to send it ventilated, not iced, in order to have a demonstration as to the keeping qualities of the fruit when shipped in this way. The baskets are not crowded together as closely as the boxes in a packed car, and are really well ventilated. If this car should go through ventilated, not iced, in good condition, it would probably demonstrate that a great deal of the cheaper grades of fruit, at this time of the year, before the real warm weather is upon us, can go without ice. As the cost of icing a car will average about \$75, this in itself would be a great saving. Then the packing is much less expensive, no paper being used, and the labor would be much less. With the baskets in general use, they, too, ought to be constructed for less money than the boxes.

While the baskets have been used more or less in the lower districts heretofore, this is the first car to go out from Redlands packed in baskets. It is understood that the Orange Growers will also get out a car in baskets at once. The car thus packed by the Golden Association goes to Michigan, on an order from a man who handles two or three cars of fruit packed in that way last year, and liked it so well that he asked for a Redlands shipment so packed.

With the cost of icing eliminated and cost of packing reduced very materially, it can be seen that for the poorer grades the saving would be very material, and it would even make "shippable" much fruit of the "standard" grade that now oftentimes goes to the dump pile. In order to maintain the reputation of Redlands fruit, and in order to avoid possible losses, it has been the custom in the

past to dump considerable fruit that was really as good, or better, than much shipped by the peatland and alfalfa districts. By putting this fruit in baskets, there can be considerable money brought into this section, and the amount of cheaper fruit thus sent out would not be sufficient to jeopardize the market on the grades.

The result of the present experiment will be watched for with considerable interest.

A Worker for Parcels Post.

The following is from the Rural New Yorker:

On page 196, under "Brevities," I found the following: "Count that day lost when you do not start a discussion of the benefits from a parcels post. Keep talking about it." The retail grocers of Youngstown (the city in which I do my marketing) are organized into what they call the Retail Grocers' Association. Recently they held their annual banquet, and among other notables present was J. R. Green, president of the National Retail Grocers' Association. In an address, among other things, he read a copy of the parcels post bill, and condemned it in an unmistakable way. He advised the members to interview Congressman Kennedy and have him pledge himself to oppose the measure. Two hundred Congressmen, he stated, have already agreed to vote against the bill, and they expected to secure the pledge of many more. I wrote a two column article in defense of the parcels post to the daily paper in which the address of President Green was printed. In this article I asked the grocers to give me, through the columns of this daily, the cause for opposing so very strenuously this measure. I ended by saying, "Now why, please tell us why, do you oppose it so? Echo still answers why?" I signed myself "Only a Hayseed."

A few days ago I saw the treasurer of the Grocers' Association, a friend of mine. I asked him whether he read the article in the daily by "Only a Hayseed." "Oh, yes," he said; "we discussed it at our last meeting, but decided not to reply; that article never was written by a hayseed; we think we know the fellow. He is a paid agent of the mail order house, and to reply would only start discussion which would do us no good." Now, there you have, lined up in a solid rank with the powerful express companies both country and city merchants against parcels post, with over 200 pledged members of Congress back of them, and on a still hunt for more. They dare not come out openly and discuss the measure; they know they have no ground to stand upon. Do the friends of the measure work it hard for its passage? Have we got 200 pledged members in Congress? If not, why not? Our cause is just; theirs, on the other hand, is prompted by greed and selfishness. Should there be anyone in the R. N. Y. family who thinks parcels post should not become a law, let him give just one good reason for thinking so. I never yet heard of one, or if anyone else who is not a member of the Rural family reads this, and has just a ghost of reason for thinking so, let him kindly give it to us. J. H. Bollinger.

Ohio.

R. N. Y.—If we had a few more men

like Mr. Bollinger to challenge such people everywhere we would make progress faster!

The Rural New Yorker has also been printing some correspondence with congressmen. It is interesting reading:

In our series of letters from congressmen on the parcels post question we print this week one from Congressman Landis, of Indiana, written to a R. N. Y. reader:

I have your letter of the 1st instant advocating the establishment of a parcels post system. I am unalterably opposed to this proposition at this time. There are many things we would like to have through the Government, just as we would like to have them for ourselves, but this would mean increased taxation in some new direction. I would also like to see one-cent letter postage, which benefit the whole people, and under which the benefits would be more generally distributed.

The government is now paying an average of three hundred dollars per year for every R. F. D. route over and above all receipts from postage on matter collected, as well as delivered, on these routes. I am in favor of the system, nevertheless, but we cannot have all things we would like at one time. C. B. Landis.

Mr. Landis does not dodge at least. He is opposed to the parcels post. If we lived in his district we would vote against him. The following letter from the man who wrote Mr. Landis covers the point:

"There seems one great difference between parcels post and the rural mail system. The latter was a great thing for the spoilmen. If there is a deficit it is largely their fault. The rural carriers get \$2.40 per day for some seven hours and a 24-mile drive, while the Star Route carrier used to get less than 40 cents for 22 miles and about the same time and no side line. The drivers of the creamery wagon, just as competent and well educated, get 90 cents and house rent for a like drive, but must take care of a lot of cows in addition and work the balance of the day. There is a general feeling that the examinations are a 'snap' affair, and certainly nothing like the effort is made that there is now to get men for the army and navy or was made by the old Star Route contractor. There is also a feeling that the best equipped man is liable to have his paper credited to some ignorant henchman. The service certainly isn't what it should be for the money, for I have counted 17 pieces of other people's mail in my box in one month, not counting paper I take, and was given wrong copies of or my mail that went astray. The carrier used to be glad to bring us groceries, bread, hardware or anything for a small charge. Now it is handier to send to a mail-order house for things we cannot raise or make ourselves, for we only make few trips to town and have to buy in quantities anyway."

A later number, of the same paper, gives a sequel to the above:

In our collection of letters from congressmen we printed one from Mr. Landis of Indiana. Now read the following from one of our readers:

Concerning the letter published on

page 294, where Congressman Landis defines his position on the parcels post, will say that I have also written him on the same subject, and received a similar reply in which he argues economy as his reason for opposing the measure. A few days after receiving his reply I also received a package of free seeds, which I acknowledged as follows:

"Closely following your recent letter, in which you plead economy as your reason for opposing parcels post legislation, I received a package of garden seed free as a favor from you. I wish to say that I use several dollars' worth of seeds each year. Still the seeds sent me by you at Government expense are not often just what I want, and consequently are not planted. Now, if the Government and the mail system were relieved of this expense of sending me, each year, these seeds that I do not want, could it not give me cheaper and better service in carrying seeds that I do want? It seems to me that your package of free seeds cancels all your economy argument for opposing parcels post."

Likely you have already given Mr. Landis all the attention you care to in your paper, but I send you the above, so you may know that the farmers out here are doing some hand-writing on the wall, and asking our lawmakers to take notice.

That was well answered. If there were more farmers like this one some of these congressmen would stay at home. That is where Mr. Landis would shine to good advantage. Keep at him and others like him. These drops of ink will grow until they burst into letters of fire upon the wall.

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